

# **GENETICS OF LONGEVITY CONSORTIUM: SCIENTIFIC OPPORTUNITY FUNDS**

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

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The aim of the Longevity Consortium is to discover, confirm, and understand the genetic determinants of longevity in humans.

### **OVERVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC OPPORTUNITY FUNDS:**

The process was developed to provide funds for small scientific projects, such as the following:

1. Confirmatory studies of significant associations between candidate genes and human longevity.
2. Rapid testing of new candidate genes in human populations.
3. Focused pilot studies that will translate basic science discoveries into information about genes and genetic variation that can be tested for association with longevity in human populations.

Applications will undergo a rigorous, but rapid, peer review, as outlined below.

### **TYPES OF PROPOSALS:**

All proposals must involve the genetics of human longevity, such as:

- Methodological projects that enhance our ability to study links between genetics and human longevity or aging
- Projects that investigate gene-environment interactions involving human longevity
- Identification of key genetic factors in a pathway related to human longevity
- Rapid confirmation of findings from other studies of the genetics of human longevity
- Preliminary studies needed for an NIH grant application that will involve the use of Consortium resources
- Studies in model organisms that have clear implications for understanding human aging and longevity

### **PROCEDURE:**

Investigators interested in submitting a proposal should send a 300-word (maximum) letter of intent that includes the study's background/ rationale; specific aim(s); planned collaboration with Consortium investigators and/ or use of Consortium resources; and the name(s) of the investigators. Within 3 business days of submission, each letter of intent will undergo administrative review to ensure it is within the spirit of the Scientific Opportunity Funds. If the plan is approved for submission, the applicant will be notified immediately and invited to submit a formal proposal. Be sure to review the "Letter of Intent Guidelines" before you submit the Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for Scientific Opportunity Funds.

Active members of the Longevity Consortium may submit proposals to use the Scientific Opportunity Funds. Please see the “Membership Guidelines” for membership requirements. Active members may sponsor junior colleagues in their research group.

Each proposal for use of the Scientific Opportunity Funds must include the following:

1. Background and preliminary information
2. Specific aim(s)
3. Methods
4. Use of Consortium resources/ collaborations within Consortium

These first four sections must fit within the 8-page maximum, using 11-point Times Roman font, and 1-inch margins on all sides.

Other items that do not count against the page limit:

1. Human Subjects or Animal Studies Committee approval, as appropriate (this can be pending at the time of submission).
2. An appendix, which may only include copies of articles that are *in press*.
3. If applicable, for each collaborating cohort and/ or Consortium Core, a short Letter of Agreement to participate. This letter should not comment on the scientific aspects of the proposal.
4. If applicable, for each collaborating cohort, a signed Data Use Agreement.
5. NIH-style budget and budget justification.
6. Signed Consortium Publication Agreement. Investigators must agree to make datasets and results from proposals funded by the Scientific Opportunity Funds available to others in the Consortium at the conclusion of the project, and must adhere to the “Publication Guidelines” of the Consortium.
7. Biosketch for Principal Investigator and up to two additional key personnel.

All funded proposals will be awarded as subcontracts from California Pacific Medical Center Research Institute, and the recipient institution will need to establish a subcontractual relationship with California Pacific Medical Center. Copies of the Consortium Intellectual Property Agreements, the Consortium Publication Agreement, and sample Letter of Agreement for collaborating studies/ cohorts can be obtained from the Longevity Consortium Project Coordinator.

### **THE REVIEW PROCESS:**

1. Within 2 weeks of receipt of a formal proposal, the Administrative Core will complete an administrative review to ensure that it adheres to all requirements.
2. The Administrative Core will select up to 3 *ad hoc* Scientific Reviewers to review the proposal. Reviewers will be expected to return a written critique of the proposal on a standard form, with a 1 (best) to 5 score, within 4 weeks.
3. Within 8 weeks of submission, the Steering Committee (excluding any members with potential conflicts of interest) will review the proposal and critiques to make recommendations about funding to the OSMB.
4. Within 10 weeks of submission, the OSMB will review the Steering Committee recommendations. The OSMB recommendations will then be forwarded to NIA staff.

5. Within 12 weeks of submission, the NIA will provide final approval, and a Notification of Intent to Fund will be sent to successful applicants.

### **CRITERIA FOR REVIEW:**

Proposals will be based on standard review criteria, including:

1. Methodological rigor
2. Innovation
3. Need for rapid funding
4. Expertise/ background of research team. Junior Investigators are encouraged to apply.
5. Potential impact of the study
6. Collaboration with other investigators in the Consortium and use of Consortium Cores

Reviewers' comments will be made available to the investigator at the end of the review process.

### **RESUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:**

Proposals that are not funded after a first round of review may be resubmitted if the Steering Committee believes that the proposed work is meritorious and that important concerns can be addressed in a revised proposal. The Administrative Core will notify an investigator if an unsuccessful application may be resubmitted.

### **LEVEL OF SUPPORT:**

Awards are made at a maximum of \$75,000 direct costs, which may include salary support. To broaden the availability of the Consortium resources, less expensive projects will be given priority. In addition, the Steering Committee will make Core resources (e.g., in Genomics and Biostatistics) available without charge. Descriptions of the Cores can be found on our website (*link indicated below*).

### **FUNDING:**

Prior to funding, the investigator must send all additional institutional materials required to establish a subcontract with California Pacific Medical Center, such as IRB and/ or Animal Studies Committee approval, institutional sign-off on the application, etc.

*Details for the Longevity Consortium program and guidelines and information on submitting an application for Scientific Opportunity Funds may be obtained from the Longevity Consortium website: <http://www.longevityconsortium.org>.*